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V.—EPIGRAPHICA.

The interpretation of the Duenos inscription which I recently advanced in this Journal (30, 121 sq.) interested me in inscriptions written from right to left and without interpuncts. Now that a set of the Corpus has become accessible to me I have been able to look further into the subject, though it is certain that the indices now available do not give one a complete control even of the material of the indexed volumes. I have found, however, several matters, chiefly in the volume of Pompeian inscriptions (IV)¹, that I deem worthy of published comment.

A. Inscriptions containing the name Aemilius written from right to left:

IV, 1759 SVILIMEA, with the annotation, "retrorsum legenda est: Aemilius, itemque n. 659, 660, 660 a, 2400 d, id quod nuper demum intellexi":

ib. 659 SVILIMEA · CISSONIO · FRATRABILITER · SAL

" 660 " c<af> (= fac<it>).

" 660 a O.V.F. " ROG, CAIC . . .

" 2400 d SVIΛIMIA ∩VRVIO · SAL

" " e s · VIVRV∩ · OILIMIA SAL

" " c RVFINVS · ∩VR | IXSALM

The fondness of Aemilius for writing his name from right to left—not but that the form Aemilius is also extant (n. 1689)—is curious. In the last word of 2400 c, for which Zangenmeister advances no interpretation, he has undertaken to disguise his name even more completely. Here he uses an archaic type of A, and the I must be read several times in different syllables, while the letters have been jumbled as to their order. The most curious character is X, which I take for an upturned V modified by a diacritic. A parallel use of interlaced letters is to be found in

II, 6247, 6 IAN · I · v · EVAION · I (*in massa plumbi*)

interpreted as L. Anton<i> L<uci> l<iberti> Eunuc<hi>?

¹ Further references may be found in vol. xii, index, p. 949, s. lem. "litterae inversae in vasculis passim", Vol. III, Suppl., p. ii, p. 2567, s. lemm. "litterae inversae in vasculis", "tituli a dextra ad sinistram scripti", "monogrammata."

with the note, "lectio certa est, interpretatio incerta, cum litterae, fortasse consulto, ordinem iustum non servant". It is noteworthy that here also, if the interpretation is correct, the second character is an upturned V.

Other sodales of Aemilius also practised right-to-left writing :

IV¹, 2400f SVNĪBAS OĪVRVĬ SAL | SVA . .

" " g S · VIVRVĬ ONIBAS SAL

" 3045, VSSĖĬĬVS (cf. ib. 1530 SVCĬĬSSVS)

B. Right-to-left alphabets and numerals.

ib. 2540a D ĖA | . . ĖK | , 3217 B^A, <3218> B^A², 1219 IIVXXĬ.

C. Other inversions.

To the previous inversions we may assign as a motive the desire of playful mystification. This motive less easily applies to legionary tituli like the following :

III. 8065, 22a G ĩĩx GEL | NEMRVA | ĀNDER

= leg. xiii G. Aur. Menander (written boustrophedon).

" 8074, 16 ĖĖAIHĬ (= coh. i Aelia Gallorum)

" 8074, 1a SAĬA (= ala i Asturum);

cf. also ib. 8075, 7, 8077, 2a and b; and iv 1534 to be cited in full below.

D. Syllables interlaced.

Besides II 6247, 6 already cited, we may note

IV. 1687 ! Rm ! TEM ĖAM,

with the annotation "altera pars fortasse est Martem³ legenda". This inscription was found "in conclavi ad sinistram tablini sito, in pariete meridionali summo ad sinistram intranti ex atrio, litteris subtilibus", and may be seen in facsimile on Pl. xxxii, 17 of

¹ Here we may cite, for its bearing on the two nominatives of 2400c., iv, 2401 CVRVIVS | SABINVS | SABINVS | SABI . .

² The Corpus index omits 3218 and gives 3219, but there is a manifest error: 3219 reads ĀXĪVCĬD, which we must, in view of CĬ, interpret as an alphabet giving two signs for each letter: on X as a form for A "in inscriptionibus graphio factis" see the index, p. 216; and for the confusion of B and V on Pompeian walls, *ibid.*, pp. 275, 279. For an upturned alphabet with X as a genuine x, and the letters arranged alternately from the opposite ends of the alphabet cf. ib. 2541 ĖĖBVCĬDSĖR ĀXĖX.

³ Cf. 1620 a where MĀR is found—which is as likely to stand for Marcus or Maria as for Mars.

vol. iv of the Corpus. If I am right in interpreting the transcription symbols ! as meant for interpuncts, the solution of the puzzle that presents itself to me may be graphically represented by $\begin{array}{c} \text{MET-} \\ \text{MVR-} \end{array} \text{RAM}$. With this we may compare the entry in the index volume to the Corpus Gloss. Lat.: "Metra (= merra = $\mu\acute{\epsilon}\rho\rho\alpha$), genus unguentum (-ti, *cod. Epin.*) V. 372, 41". True, the accusative here is of somewhat difficult interpretation, but we may group it with the street-vendor's cry of Cauneas in the famous Crassus anecdote Cicero tells, or take recourse in the explanation by ellipsis. In MVRRAM we may well see an equivoque involving some fair one named Myrrha. Another solution of our rebus may be to read Metrum Mar <ci Porci Catonis?>, a phrase which appears in a 9th century MS as the title or subtitle of a collection of riddles (cf. Riese, *Anth. Lat.* II, p. 376). Similarly in 2400a to be cited presently we have a 'rebus' extant in a Greek Anthology.

IV, 1532 I · NTVM · VMLA.

Were it not for the uncertainty of the reading (cf. Zangenmeister, *ad loc.*) we might with much probability interpret this inscription as aluminum; i. e., alimentum (perhaps gen. plur.). The provenience of the inscription admits of our taking it as the name of a sort of pantry or store-room.

E. Omitted interpuncts.

The only purposed omission of interpuncts I have noted is to be found in the anacyclic hexameter presented in

IV, 2400 ab EDEMAIDIOSARAPATAPVRASOIDIOMEDE.

A proper word-division would here destroy the absolute identity of the forward and backward readings of the lines. But the intention of the scribe to make difficulty cannot be doubted if one notes the variety he has employed in the forms of A and the long I found in the 6th place from the left. It is noteworthy that this anacyclic verse is found in the *Anth. Graec. Plan. vi. 13*, but with the faulty form $\acute{\alpha}\rho\alpha\ \pi\eta\gamma\acute{\eta}$ instead of $\acute{\alpha}\rho'\ \acute{\alpha}\nu\acute{\alpha}\tau\bar{\alpha}$.

F. The following inscriptions present points of individual interest: 1° an oculist's prescription, written from right to left, and containing interesting monograms, viz.:

III, 1636: . . . IM̄ ꝥ for impet<um>.

We can hardly doubt that here the script peculiarities (cf. also no. 1639, 4) hark back to a time when the medicine-men and

Shamans attached importance to mystic formulae—and even today perscriptions are written in a curious jargon.—2° a possible love charm,

IV, 1534 OVOBISAV EREFICJA = ? O<ro> vobis n<os>
accipere,

taking *accipere*—so written as to convey the hint of its having a special meaning—in an amatory sense (cf. the Thesaurus, s. v. 312, 8; 311, 76).

Apropos of the interpretation of *DZenoi* as *Zeno*[*n*] (A. J. P. 30, 134), I note the tantalizing parallel(?) found in

IV, 1527 RUSTICUS EST CORYDOI

with the annotation, “litterae DO sat neclegenter exaratae; ultima linea litterae N principium esse potest.”

For the monogram λl recognized in *MAΛLOS* *ibid.* I can now cite something like parallels in a) IV, 1604 (= Pl. viii. 6) where the script-form $\text{ϰ}_\text{̣}$ is transcribed as ϰ in ‘fallacem’, and b) *ib.* 1645 (= Pl. xiii. 1) where a rustic-looking z is transcribed as z in ‘puellam’. If the monogram in *mallos* is *lv* (i. e. *malvos*), the upturned Λ may be paralleled by the two instances noted under A above.

To the examples cited for the doublet a/ai (l. c., p. 132), I can now add LAIVI, interpreted as LAVI in IV, 816: though dialectic vowel infection from the following *i* may be the truer explanation.

A possible objection to my arrangement of the lines of the Duenos inscription (l. c., p. 123) may arise from the position of the name Duenos, low down on its little pot. This is not to be interpreted, however, as meaning that Duenos begins the last of the three script series (= lines), but Duenos is rather in a ‘display’ position. I do not assume that Duenos, the potter, composed the legend for our jocose ‘tripod’, but we are at liberty to surmise that he made free to advertise his wares by ‘featuring’ his name.

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